

MARINE INFORMATION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA NOTICE TO MARINERS CHANGE IN DISTRIBUTION

The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) is in the midst of a hard copy to digital transition program. NGA has statutory requirements to produce and make available safety of navigation data and will continue to meet this obligation to the mariner. The weekly Notice to Mariners is available free of charge to all customers through the Internet on our website. Beginning with Notice to Mariners No. 1, 2005 NGA will no longer print and distribute hard copy versions of this weekly product.

The digital version of the weekly Notice to Mariners is available on the Maritime Safety Information website at <http://pollux.nss.nga.mil/> or through the NGA home page (www.nga.mil). All of the information and data contained in the hard copy Notice is also available on this website. Customers can rely on the same quality of data that the Notice to Mariners provides to the civil and military mariner with the advantages afforded by the Internet. Customers can access daily navigational safety updates and not be hampered by weekly mail deliveries of the hard copy Notice.

NOAA CHART NEW EDITIONS AND THEIR AVAILABILITY

NOAA recognizes two paper nautical chart products:

- the Charts-on-Demand chart distributed by OceanGrafix (www.OceanGrafix.com), and
- the traditional NOAA/NOS paper chart distributed by the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA).

The Charts-on-Demand chart is available the day after NOAA clears a New Edition for release. The traditional chart is available two to eight weeks later. Each is official, should be put into service immediately, and meets Federal chart carriage requirements immediately upon its release. For questions, contact NOAA at help@nauticalcharts.gov or call 301-713-1773 x105. Dates of Latest Edition for both charts are listed at <http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov>.

This week's new editions released by NOAA are listed below:

12231	27 th Ed. Sep 2004 NEW EDITION MD-VA-CHESAPEAKE BAY-TANGIER SOUND-NORTHERN PART (New edition due to numerous Notice to Mariners changes.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:40,000
14773	17 th Ed. Sep 2004 NEW EDITION NY-ST LAWRENCE RIVER-GANANOQUE TO ST LAWRENCE PARK (New edition due to numerous Notice to Mariners and change in format.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:15,000
14968	28 th Ed. Sep 2004 NEW EDITION MN-ONT-LAKE SUPERIOR-GRAND PORTAGE TO SHESHEEB POINT (New edition due to change in format.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:120,000
16521	6 th Ed. Sep 2004 NEW EDITION AK-ALEUTIAN ISLANDS-UNALASKA ISLAND-PROTECTION BAY TO EAGLE BAY (New edition due to change in format.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:40,000
18444	16 th Ed. Sep 2004 NEW EDITION WA-EVERETT HARBOR (New edition due to new hydrography and change in format.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:10,000
18523	55 th Ed. Sep 2004 NEW EDITION WA-COLUMBIA RIVER-HARRINGTON POINT TO CRIMS ISLAND (New edition due to new hydrography.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:40,000
18533	12 th Ed. Sep 2004 NEW EDITION OR-WA-COLUMBIA RIVER-LAKE CELILO (New edition due to numerous Notice to Mariners and various general changes.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:20,000

TIDAL CURRENT PREDICTION QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM-HUDSON RIVER

During the summer of 2004, tidal current observations were made in the Hudson River, near the site of the historical Haverstraw station, which provided the basis for the Table 2 information in the 2005 Tidal Current Tables. These new observations showed significant differences in the timing of the tidal current phases compared to the existing predictions for Haverstraw. The greatest time difference was observed in the slack before ebb, which, on average, may occur one hour later than the predictions given in the 2005 Tidal Current Tables. The Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) plans to conduct a full tidal current survey of the Hudson River beginning in 2005 to determine how much the tidal regime has changed in the River. The results of this survey may significantly change the station locations and times of tidal current phases that are published for the Hudson River. These updated tidal current predictions will likely appear in the 2006 or 2007 Tidal Current Tables. Please direct any question to email address Tide.Predictions@noaa.gov or call 301-713-2815.

DISCONTINUANCE OF 121.5 AND 243 MHZ FOR SATELLITE DISTRESS ALERTS

The Cospas-Sarsat Program has announced plans to terminate satellite processing of distress signals from 121.5 and 243 MHz emergency beacons on February 1, 2009. Users of the system will have to switch to emergency beacons operating at 406 MHz, which are more reliable and provide search and rescue agencies complete information that they need to do their job, in order to be detected by satellites.

Reasons for the Cospas-Sarsat program to discontinue use is driven by guidance from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). These two agencies are responsible for regulating the safety of ships and aircraft on international transits and handle international standards for maritime and aeronautical search and rescue missions. In addition, 121.5 MHz false alerts inundate search and rescue resources which impact the effectiveness of lifesaving services.